

SuperScript

Volume 12, Issue 7



The Little Chapter that Couldn't...and the Sub-chapter that Could

- Mala Rupnarain, Edmonton Liaison

When we think of the West Coast, often times the temperate weather and great getaway spots come to mind. In the STC world, some of us reflect back on the successful and well attended STC Region 7 2002 Conference held in Vancouver. If you have a look at the STC West Coast Chapter website at www.stcwestcoast.ca, you'll find many great activities, events, and re-

sources comparable to those offered by the Alberta Chapter.

Much like Vancouver, Calgary hosts a wide array of programs, workshops, and get-togethers to foster a growing community of talented technical communicators, authors, trainers, information architects, etc.

This past December, I took a 90 minute ride aboard BC Ferries, waving goodbye to the storm clouds rolling in over Vancouver while embracing the sun that accompanied me all the way to Vancouver Island. As much as I love the lush environment, cool sands and cooler views on Kitsilano Beach, and year round recreational opportunities offered in Vancouver, my internal Edmontonian weather sensors had left me in a state of sunshine withdrawal after a 5-day visit.

The upcoming visit to Victoria was much more anticipated: besides the milder, sunnier climate, I was also looking forward to a visit with an STC e-penpal.

Inge Zegel, a technical communications consultant and former Treasurer of the Vancouver Island Chapter, had contacted me exactly one year ago inquiring about the successes and challenges encountered

We were both new to the executive for our respective groups, and trying to revive interest in the Chapter...

by the Edmonton sub-group. We were both new to the executive for our respective groups, and trying to "revive interest in the chapter and provide good value for the membership price of the STC" as Inge stated. She wanted to know if becoming a sub-group with the ability to share resources with the West Coast Chapter might be more feasible than existing as a separate chapter. I explained that one of our successes as a sub-chapter was in forming a liaison with Grant MacEwan Community College and its Professional Writing program, similar to Calgary's relationship with Mount Royal College. By injecting our group with new blood and having the instructors promote the Edmonton STC, we've seen higher attendance and a better variety of pro-

grams. While professional members enjoy the convenience and atmosphere provided at Grant MacEwan, students and instructors also appreciate having meetings scheduled nearby and after classes.

Another and very significant point was that Alberta's economy is doing well and the STC communities in Calgary and Edmonton are not shy when it comes to sharing resources and information. Within the Edmonton group, communication is open amongst 50 members. I was hoping that some of the ideas that worked for Edmonton would also work for the Victoria group.

However, when I finally met Inge in person, she gave me the sad news that the Vancouver Island Chapter is dissolving

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INSIDE SUPERSCRIPT



A Word from Our President

- Ken Schatzke

As we enter March, the STC and the Alberta Chapter are in full swing with a variety of events and other activities.

Programs and Events

Last month, the Programs and Events team held its second program and first workshop of the year in Calgary. At the program, Kathy Legg explained how to build successful, productive long-distance teams, and at the workshop, Cheryl Dumba introduced Adobe FrameMaker. On behalf of the Administrative Council, I would like to thank Kathy and Cheryl for sharing their experience with the Chapter as well as Laura Fortems, Linda Robson, Karen Reid, and Carey Fougere for organizing the events. Well done!

This month, we will be holding programs in both Calgary and Edmonton as well as our second workshop of the year. On March 16, Grant MacEwan College's Lucille Mazo will be presenting a program on instructional design in Edmonton. Two days later, on March 18, Mount Royal College's Glenn Ruhl will share his insights on the role of the design element in documentation with Calgary members. On March 27, Milena Radzikowska will present a workshop on Web site design and usability.

As always, we will also be holding our monthly coffee night at Annie's Book Company in Calgary. Coffee nights are a fantastic opportunity to meet other technical communicators while discussing a topic of interest. The March coffee night will be on the 16, and its topic will be "Zero in on Your SIG".

To learn more about any of these events and register for pro-

grams and workshops, go to www.stc-alberta.org.

Mount Royal College Awards and Scholarship

Mount Royal College's Centre for Communication Studies held its annual awards ceremony in February. I was in attendance and presented the Chapter's scholarship to Natashia Menezes and its awards to Sherry Willets, Deidre O'Riain, Elizabeth Graham, and Sandra Sterling-Weicker.

Bylaw Referendum

You will be receiving a package in the mail this month containing information on proposed changes to the bylaws and a ballot so that you can participate in the referendum on these changes. If you don't receive your package by the end of the month, please e-mail me at president@stc-alberta.org.

To encourage participation in the referendum, we are holding a draw for a free Chapter workshop registration. All eligible members who return their ballots by May 30 will be entered in the draw.

Long-term Planning

In February, the Chapter held a special coffee night to ask members, "How can we improve?" Attendees shared a variety of ideas, which we have recorded to include as part of our long-term planning initiative.

The Chapter is also launching an online message board, which

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Alberta Chapter STC Administrative Council 2003-2004

Executive

President

Ken Schatzke
president@stc-alberta.org

Vice President

Gord Douglas
v.president@stc-alberta.org

Treasurer

Gary Ten-Hove
treasurer@stc-alberta.org

Secretary

Sandra Law
secretary@stc-alberta.org

Past President

Ian Hawkins
pastpresident@stc-alberta.org

Events

Programs

Laura Fortems/Linda Robson
program@stc-alberta.org

Workshops

Karen Reid
workshops@stc-alberta.org

Coffee Nights

Kathy Gerritsen
coffeenights@stc-alberta.org

Registration/Hospitality

Carey Fougere
registration@stc-alberta.org

Operations

Membership

Kristie Sinclair
membership@stc-alberta.org

Mentorship

Kristie Sinclair
mentorship@stc-alberta.org

Archivist

Kelly Hendrickson
archivist@stc-alberta.org

Communications

Newsletter

Jessie Channey, Team Lead
Andrea Hogg
Robin Bly
Rosemary Reed
newsletter@stc-alberta.org

Webmaster/Jobline

Ian Hawkins
webmaster@stc-alberta.org

Public Relations

Nancy Sequeira, Team Lead
Helen Schleedoorn
Theresa Tremaine
Natashia Menezes
publicrelations@stc-alberta.org

Edmonton

Management & Communication

Mala Rupnarain
edmontonliaison@stc-alberta.org

Programs

Mala Rupnarain
edmontonprograms@stc-alberta.org

Education

Mount Royal College

Sherrie Richards/Libby Graham
mrcstudliaison@stc-alberta.org
Glenn Ruhl
mrcliaison@stc-alberta.org

Grant MacEwan College

Position Vacant
gmcstudliaison@stc-alberta.org

Think Weird and Prosper

- Rahel Anne Baillie, STC Director/Sponsor for Region 7

In the driver's side pocket of my car door, I keep a red clown nose, those foam bulbs you find in joke shops. I got it from a dynamic speaker who talked about giving ourselves permission to be an oddball, to shock people out of complacency by daring to be different. I don't use the nose all the time, but in the times I have, the nose has effectively deflected road rage (who can resist a middle-aged woman in a Jaguar with a red foam nose?), helped me make traffic maneuvers requiring the cooperation of an adjacent driver, and brought smiles to the drivers around me. It's weird, but a powerful tool.

Being weird, the outsider, the oddball, has never bothered me much. So you can see why I like this quote from Tom Peters: "The only way to effect true transformation in the workplace is to enlist the outliers in your organization to your cause. Find the weirdos and the freaks, offer support for the projects they're secretly pursuing, then get them to help you with your own revolutionary change ideas."

Part of the reason I like this quote is because I — and many other technical communicators — identify with being an "outlier" in an organization. TechComm has traditionally been seen as an outlying department. Until recently, we hadn't been seen as a group poised to help an organization go through "revolutionary change." But as the importance of good user experience takes hold, we are clarifying our license to contribute, and contribute in ways that the corporation has not really thought of until now.

As I've discussed in previous columns, the global economic shift is pushing us to become contributors of value. To contribute value, we have to change the way we think about business and think about our skills.

Now, more than ever, we need to "think weird." Some may call it thinking outside the box. But that expression has become trite, and the inner bureaucrat has used that concept to promote bureaucratic thinking in new and different ways. That's not what I mean here. I mean, we have to think, weird. Embrace your inner clown (my apologies to past STC president, Mary Wise, who actually went to "clown school" before becoming a technical communicator) or your inner wildbrain (as coined by Dale Douten to describe certain types of people whose creative genius often goes unrecognized, and too often punished, in the workplace). Tap into ways of working, ways of managing, ways of being that shake up the hunker-down-till-the-economy-picks-up attitude we've taken on.

What would this look like in your professional life? What could this look like? Let me counter that with a question for you: how far can you stretch your imagination? Let me give you a small example with big implications.

The only way to effect true transformation in the workplace is to enlist the outliers in your organization.

Scene: An software engineering firm creating C code, about to branch out into C++ using UML. The developers want to use the code comments to generate the bulk of the API documentation. Is this a techcomm

nightmare, or a fabulous opportunity?

Cut to: The "inside the box" thinker who says: Oh no, we'll be reduced to glorified proofreaders. Give me back my control over the documentation! Cut to: The "out of the box" thinker says: Great, once we clean up the comments in the source code, I'll spend less time maintaining this documentation, and have more time for other things.

Now cut to: The weird thinkers, who are so out of the box that they're in a whole other box, says: Wow, what a concept! How can I leverage that technology or a similar one to get that same result on other projects? Maybe I can eliminate most of the production work and spend my time doing strategic thinking to add end-user value!

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A Word from Our President


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you can use to share your thoughts and ideas with us. More information on the message board will be available soon.

While the Chapter gathers information for its long-term planning, the Society is progressing with its transformation initiative. In February, chapter, SIG, and other leaders in the Society met via conference call to discuss the initiative in detail.

2004-2005 Administrative Council

We are beginning to recruit members for the 2004-2005 Administrative Council. Being part of the council is your opportunity to network with other technical communicators while playing a leadership role in the Chapter.

We will be publishing more information on available council positions soon. In the mean time, if you are interested in joining the council or have any questions, e-mail me at president@stc-alberta.org. 

EDMONTON

V

- Mala Rupnarain, Edmonton Liaison

E

Technical Writing and Instructional Design

Special Guest Speaker: Lucille Mazo

Topic: Technical Writing and Instructional Design

When: Tuesday, March 16, 2003

Where: Grant MacEwan downtown campus, room 6-313G

Time: Networking from 6:30–7:00 p.m. Presentation starts at 7:00 p.m.

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All Edmonton presentations are free and open to members and non-members. Bring a friend! We'll have refreshments and there will be door prizes!

Note: RSVP required. To reserve a seat, please send a message to edmontonprograms@stc-alberta.org on or before Monday, March 15, 2004.

About the Presentation

Technical writing teaches many subjects to many types of learners and users. In her writing and designing of courses, Lucille Mazo has recognized that technical writers require a solid understanding of their audiences in order to understand their needs and to transfer these needs into effective and comprehensive documents that teach and train the learners/users. Learn about the four basic areas that involve a good needs assessment: 1) The Learning Context 2) The Learner 3) The Learning Tasks 4) Evaluation.

About Lucille

Lucille Mazo was a corporate writer for 15 years before she began teaching at Grant MacEwan College for 10 years. In 1999, Lucille was invited to join the faculty in the newly formed Bachelor of Applied Communications in Professional Writing four-year degree. From the program's inception, she has developed and designed the Technical Writing stream within this program. She also teaches a full year course in Instructional Design where her technical writing students learn how important it is to understand the needs of the learner/user and how it is part of technical writing instructions and factual information.

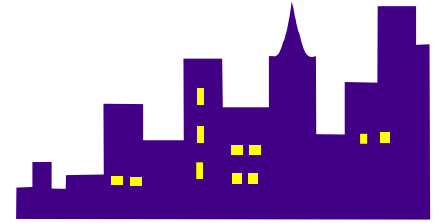
Reminder

If you're making permanent plans to flee our dry Arctic cold or are no longer using your e-mail service, please let your friendly neighbourhood Programs Coordinator (edmontonprograms@stc-alberta.org) know so that I can enter changes in the local database.



The Contest

Oh it's soooo easy. Here are the rules: The Edmonton STC member that attends the most number of meetings in 2003-2004 wins a grand reward that will be presented to him or her at our year end meeting. In the event of a tie, members will fight over the reward in the parking lot...No?...OK fine, there'll be a draw. A win-win situation for you—attend some interesting presentations, receive a gift, become the envy of technical communicators everywhere within a 25-mile radius!



Region 8 Conference Update

- Eric Butow, Conference Coordinator

Seminar Speakers Wanted

The STC 2004 Region 8 Conference is still looking for speakers for a variety of topics including:


- Using the latest tools and technologies
- Editing and indexing techniques
- Creating training and Web-based training
- Developing course materials
- Creating online user documentation
- Creating graphics and Web sites
- Designing user interfaces
- Managing people and projects

Whether you have presented at other conferences or chapter events, have led round-table discussions or hands-on tutorials, or have a unique case study that you'd like to share—we'd like to know! What do you know that you could share with your peers?

Even if you've never presented before—STC members are the most knowledgeable technical communicators around, and sharing your knowledge and expertise will help to make this year's conference the best ever. We'd like for YOU to help Chart a Bold Course.

As a speaker, you'll receive:

- A substantial discount on registration.
- An invitation to attend the post-conference activities at no charge.
- The opportunity to include a speaking engagement at a major conference on your resume.
- Extended networking opportunities—meeting other technical communicators can provide opportunities for work, training, or additional speaking engagements in the future.

For more information about the conference, or to view the Call For Papers, go to www.stcregion8conference.org. 



Coffee Night



You are invited to the Alberta Chapter STC Calgary Coffee Night held on the third Tuesday of every month. Join us for some stimulating conversation with fellow technical communicators at the next coffee night. The coffee is on us! No registration is necessary and non-members are always welcome. See the [Mark Your Calendars](#) page for more information.

Topic: Zero in on Your SIG
Date: Tuesday, March 16, 2004
Time: 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Location: Annie's Books, 910-16 Avenue NW in "The Literary Salon".


Want to discuss something else? Have a few burning questions on your mind? Just want to have a relaxing evening out of the house? Coffee Nights offer an informal environment to gather with your peers and chat about anything at all, so come on out!

Think Weird and Prosper

Continued from page 3.

This is a true story, and as you may guess, I was the "weird" thinker. (If I weren't, the story would be told from an entirely different perspective.) When that situation arose, my in-the-box colleagues branded me a renegade, a trouble-maker. Why couldn't we just churn out work like we'd been doing for years? Was that not what our "core business" was: editing documents using the assembly-line production model?

Now, after barely weathering the economic storm, the department is no longer. The I-like-the-box thinkers have moved on, some to other in-the-box positions, others to new in-the-box opportunities. The weird thinker, on the other hand, became a consultant, bringing out-of-the-box thinking to clients as a "strategic contributor who can write." Happy clients, happy consultant.

In the various informational interviews I give, I hear people ask a similar question in many different ways: Where does one start in the quest to "think weird"? How do I differentiate myself from the rest of the market? How can I get someone to "pick me" from amongst their choices? The answers are as varied and personal as the number of questioners. I imagine it's much like beginning any other venture—a diet, a fitness program, or even therapy—that requires self-reflection and action. For me, it started with a little red ball of foam. 



The Little Chapter that Couldn't

Continued from page 1.

this year. With approximately 25 members located in a government city plagued by cutbacks and few opportunities in the private sector, everyone felt it would be best to close shop and join the larger STC chapter on the mainland.

“There are more resources to draw from—you only have to get creative about sharing presentations and making activities accessible to everyone, instead of having to dream up and organize (and finance) the activities. Especially in the case of Edmonton and Calgary, where there are no ferry schedules and few expenses involved, it is feasible to organize activities in one city which can be attended by folks from the other city,” cited Inge as immediate advantages. “Or alternatively, videos or the web” could be used for presentations and meetings.

According to Inge, some advantages of having a sub-group status include:

1. Access to different “hubs” provides both groups with more exposure to different markets and their pros and cons.
2. Closer connection (i.e., better networking) to the people in the “larger” group, even though these connections may not be as close as for those within the large group. For example, the folks in Calgary probably have a different relationship with each other than they do with the folks in Edmonton; and the same can be said for the Edmonton folks. However, at least everyone belongs to same Chapter and information and resources are easily shared. People see each other’s name in newsletters etc., providing a closer connection between the two groups. Also, Edmontonians may find themselves working in Calgary at some point, and vice versa, especially if they do contract work. By already being part of the same Chapter and perhaps knowing some names from the newsletters, it is easier to connect and integrate with the Calgary (or Edmonton) folks.
3. A sub-group or sub-chapter does not require a full executive. Leadership is required of course, but this can be a smaller group and you can avoid having to fill the formal functions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, etc. It is sometimes easier to have members volunteer with the organizing of an event than to fill a formal position e.g., president, etc.

Potential disadvantages could be political in nature. “There has to be genuine respect and understanding for the needs and issues of the smaller group; they shouldn’t be treated as second class just because they’re smaller. The members of the smaller group are equally qualified and professional, pay the same dues, and should be regarded and treated as equals.”




Although it is unfortunate to see the V.I. Chapter dissolve, we can use it as an example of what not to do, especially during times when our economy may not be doing well. Based on discussions with Inge and my observations of the market for technical communicators in Victoria and surrounding areas over the past 2 years, evidently there is a correlation between job availability and communication between members. As there is more competition for contract work and scarce permanent, salaried

positions on the island, members of the community are less likely to share information and participate with their STC chapter. But isn’t this a contradiction – when professional communicators can’t communicate? It seems that in times of job loss and flooded markets, members would want to turn to their peers for support.

Edmonton is also a government city that has had its share of cutbacks over the years and we’ve seen many of our head offices close down or move to other cities like Calgary. We are a successful group because we encourage participation and are ready to help out fellow members. But we are also larger than Victoria, with a strong private sector, and constant demand for writers in industries like Petroleum and Software Development. As a sub-chapter operating 2.5 hours north of the main hub, we have learned to communicate quite well with each other and enjoy being part of a larger group. Maintaining a positive and productive attitude such as this has helped members feel that they belong to a well-organized and approachable Society.

As Inge looks forward to a fresh start with the West Coast Chapter in Vancouver, she offers some sound advice.

“Regardless of whether the two locations run as separate chapters or as a chapter and a satellite group, there will always be differences between them. In Alberta’s case, Calgary will be Calgary, and will be bigger. The number of activities and the “feel” of a meeting there will likely always be different from events and the dynamics in Edmonton. But this is not a bad thing. Quite the opposite, it’s what makes different places unique and fun. As long as things are fair, enjoy the differences, and don’t aim to become just like the other. It will never happen. If it did, life would become very boring.”

With the age old rivalry between Edmonton and Calgary in all matters hockey or football related, we’re hardly boring. And within our thriving STC communities, although we’re certainly not rivals, we share enough differences to make us one of the most unique and popular chapters in Canada. Not boring at all. 

Saturday Workshop: Concepts in Web Site Design and Usability

Workshop topics include usability, navigation, testing, and, writing and image manipulation for the Web. Familiarity with HTML and image editing software (for example, Photoshop) is recommended.

About the Presenter

Milena Radzikowska has been working as a professional visual communication designer, in both print and Web media, for the past five years. She recently completed her Master of Design Degree at the University of Alberta. She is an instructor in the Electronic Publishing program at Mount Royal College.



Topic: Concepts in Web Site Design and Usability

Instructor: Milena Radzikowska

Location: Mount Royal College (Room E141)
4825 Richard Rd. SW

Date: Saturday, March 27, 2004


Time: 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Fee: Members \$50.00

Student Members \$25.00

Non-members \$110.00

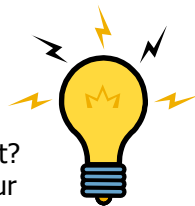
Late Registration Fee: One week before event the fees increase by \$10.00

Registration: Required. To register, complete the form on the registration page of the STC Web site. (Registration must be cancelled five days in advance of the workshop, or the registrant will be billed the workshop fees.) Sign up quickly as space is limited. 

Got a Great Workshop Idea?

Are you an expert in a particular subject? Think you'd be interested in sharing your expertise with fellow STC members at a four-hour workshop? Know someone who might be?

Contact Karen Reid, Workshops Coordinator, at workshops@stc-alberta.org with your workshop ideas.



MRC Awards and Scholarships


Libby Graham & Sherrie Richards, MRC Liaisons

Since 1997, the Alberta Chapter of the Society for Technical Communication (STC) has awarded four Mount Royal College students with a one year membership in the STC (currently \$56 US). Award eligibility is straightforward. Students must attend MRC full-time, carry a full course load in the Bachelor of Applied Communications – Technical Communications program, and have the highest grade point average in the fall semester. One student is chosen from each year of the four-year program (after completing 15, 30, 60 and 90 credits). January 2004 recipients are:

Year 1	Sherry Willetts
Year 2	Deirdre O'Riain
Year 3	Libby Graham
Year 4	Sandra Sterling-Weicker

The Chapter initiated an additional award in 1999; a \$300 scholarship presented to a full-time student who has completed a minimum of 30 credits, has a minimum GPA of 3.0, has demonstrated leadership qualities through student affairs or extra-curricular activities, and shows financial need. The winning student is chosen by the MRC Centre for Communication Studies. The January 2004 recipient is Natasha Menezes

Awards were presented at a Mount Royal College ceremony on February 25, 2004. The winners are also invited to be guests of the STC Alberta Chapter's Annual General Meeting this spring.

Congratulations Sherry, Deidre, Libby, Sandra, and Natasha. 



SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE

Each year, STC offers scholarships to full-time graduate and undergraduate students pursuing careers in technical communication.

Four awards of \$1,000 each will be granted for academic year 2004-2005.

Application deadline is February 16, 2004.

Application forms and instructions are available from the STC office:

901 N. Stuart Street, Suite 904
Arlington, VA 22203-1822
(703) 522-4114

Program: Building Long-Distance Writing Teams

Carmen Wyatt, Student Member

Not virtual teams—long distance teams! In her lively presentation, Kathy Legg reminds us that “virtual” means something that’s not quite real, and that things that aren’t real don’t get support from organizations. Long distance teams are real and involve particular challenges and coping strategies. How do we build long distance teams that are perceived as successful contributors?

First, build them for the right reasons. The best reason for building long distance teams is to realize organizational goals. These may include reducing environmental impact, reducing the

Team leaders need to be vigilant in monitoring morale and work at ensuring each member has a sense of belonging and striving toward a common goal.

risk of travelling, working in the global marketplace, or encouraging employees to work where they are happiest and most productive. Some companies decide to use long distance teams to save time and money, only to find that those savings don’t materialize. For long distance teams to be successful, money and time must be invested in important infrastructure: appropriate work and communications technology, training, technical support, and attentive management.


Organizations committed to using long distance teams face unique challenges, such as working across time zones, communicating between various cultures, and nurturing team spirit across distances. Working across time zones and the International Dateline means team members must be flexible and patient and expect to wait several hours, overnight, or longer to hear responses from other members.

Team members and team leaders must be knowledgeable about languages, work days, holidays, and expectations regarding punctuality, deadlines, and working relationships that differ across cultures. Creative solutions must be developed to deal with systemic practices such as bribery or differing labour laws that create issues for the team and the organization.

Creating and maintaining team spirit is difficult when team members are in distant locations. Team leaders need to be vigilant in monitoring morale and work at ensuring each member has a sense of belonging and striving toward a common goal. Variations on traditional team building exercises, such as supplying team members with items like team T-shirts, or creating a collage of team members’ photos and distributing it amongst the members, can help build a sense of belonging. It is also important for the team to communicate socially, through a team Web site or chatroom, for example.

Three strategies can be implemented at the start of a project to address long distance team challenges.

- Develop “standard operating procedures” defining the expectations of the group and the rules that they work by to address cultural and time zone differences.
- Develop a formal technology strategy addressing basic considerations such as how members access technology, what software will be used, and how files will be stored.
- Develop a communication strategy outlining how members will talk to each other. Since e-mail is blind to time zone differences, it is the most commonly used option, but care must be taken to use it well.

Kathy emphasizes that long distance teams successfully meet organizational goals, but in order to succeed they must be respected as real teams, whose unique challenges can be met by using targeted strategies. 

WE NEED YOU!

We are looking for volunteers to help with:

- the 2004 Annual General Meeting
- the Newsletter
- Membership Coordinator

The Newsletter Team is looking for another dynamic member who enjoys layout, editing, and preferably has FTP skills.

Anyone interested in these opportunities can contact Ken Schatzke at president@stc-alberta.org.

Upcoming Telephone Seminars

Keywords in Indexing and Search

Presenter: Seth Maislin
Date: March 10, 2004
Time: 1:00-2:30 p.m. ET



Language is the first, biggest, and most obvious barrier between people and their goals of finding information. Whether you're optimizing search queries and results presentation, improving the navigation of your Web site, or writing print and online indexes, choosing the right words can improve both accessibility and user confidence. In Seth Maislin's third practical seminar, you'll learn how to accomplish the following:

- find the words that work
- optimize context and categorization
- develop and control vocabularies
- label for storage vs. keyword for retrieval
- build searches and search results
- use dynamic presentation environments
- translate terms between audiences and languages

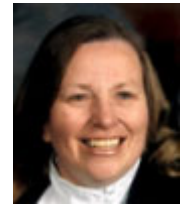
Owing to the proliferation of search engines and automatic content, the burden on users to guess the right index words is increasing. Improved labeling, better keyword vocabularies, and functional label architectures can relieve that burden. A summary of examples will help you realize the potential to immediately improve your index, Web, and search products.

Speaker Biography

Speaker Seth Maislin is an information architecture and indexing consultant specializing in the construction of usable Web-based and knowledge hierarchies. He is an adjunct professor at Bentley College, an instructor at Middlesex Community College, and an information architect and indexing trainer at nSight, Inc. Past projects include indexing America Online, building content directories for Lycos.com and its partners, cataloguing clip art for Mattel, and indexing Microsoft Corporation's Web sites. Former in-house positions include senior integration manager at Terra Lycos, Inc., and senior indexer at O'Reilly & Associates, Inc. Seth serves as elected director of the American Society of Indexers. For more information, visit Seth's Web site at <http://taxonomist.tripod.com>.

Winning New Business: Preparing and Submitting Proposals 101B

Presenter: Judith Herr
Date: March 24, 2004
Time: 1:00-2:30 p.m. ET



In her previous STC telephone seminar, "*Winning New Business: Preparing the Proposal 101*," Judith Herr presented basic vocabulary and processes needed to write proposals for government work. This second installment offers concrete strategies for preparing and managing proposals that win. For technical communicators new to proposal and grant writing, the seminar also will provide concrete suggestions for breaking into the business. Learn how to apply your technical communication skills to a new, challenging area of communication—and succeed at doing it!

Speaker Biography

Judith Herr successfully manages and coordinates both small and high-stakes, complex proposal efforts. She leverages twenty years' experience in technical communication to prepare proposals, train and manage technical communication teams, prepare training packages for global corporations, and provide consultative communication support to diverse clients. Judith led and contributed to wins of numerous contracts with organizations such as the Department of Energy, NASA, National Institute of Health, Kaiser Permanente, and other state and research organizations.

Judith's experience spans disciplines including information technology, management and adult learning, occupational health and safety, environment, public health, biology and medicine, robotics, and organizational development. She is an enthusiastic supporter of STC, having raised her hand fifteen years ago to volunteer at her very first chapter meeting. 📞



Encouraging Volunteers to Follow Through

- Brenda Huettner, Associate Fellow, Southern Arizona Chapter

Murphy's Law says that anything that can go wrong, will go wrong. Often, you can see that law in action in your own chapter! Committees that you thought were running smoothly suddenly lose half their members; tasks that seemed to be under control fall by the wayside as volunteers go on vacation, get sick, or have sudden deadlines dropped on them by their bosses. Sometimes, too, volunteers suddenly lose their jobs and then resign from volunteer positions to focus on their job hunt. This is exactly the time they should be following through on their volunteer commitments! When you complete a task for STC, you show that you are reliable, you show off your superb communication skills, and you build your reputation as a person who accomplishes things. The technical communication community is not that big, and "do-ers" get noticed by the hiring managers and the people they work with. As Society leaders, we need to encourage our teams to reap all the benefits of volunteer opportunities, and to show how valuable they can be to STC and any other type of project

STC Resources

Readers are encouraged to make use of the growing archive of Leadership Tips articles at www.stc.org/leadershipTips.asp. This month's addition is Developing Commitment and Motivation by Suzanna Laurent. As always there is a wealth of information available in Tieline, the publication for Society leaders. If you do not receive Tieline, you can view all of the past issues online at www.stc.org/tieline.asp.

Chapter Member Publishes in SAIT eNewsletter



Alberta Chapter member Kathy Legg recently published an article in the SAIT e-newsletter, Training Matters. Kathy's article, Handouts Make a Difference, provides ideas and alternatives to those dull slide show handouts that we have all received—and maybe given out—at one time or another. Most

presenters concentrate on perfecting their presentation skills and ignore the importance of their handouts. To read Kathy's article in the March issue of Training Matters, visit the Training Matters web site at www.sait.ca/trainingmatters. Congratulations to Kathy.

Have you published an article? A book? Are you giving a seminar? Let us know, and we'll let other Chapter members know.



Reminder

Update Your Contact Information

Keeping your STC member information (including your mailing and e-mail addresses) current ensures that you don't miss out on STC publications and announcements.

STC International

Member information can be updated online on the Society Web site at www.stc.org/formAddressChange.asp. (Note: You will need to log in first.)

Alberta Chapter

To update your information for the Chapter, send an e-mail to our Membership Coordinator at membership@stc-alberta.org.





Mark Your Calendars!

Programs and Administrative Meetings

Attend programs to discover the ideas and technologies that affect today's technical communicators.

Location: McDougall Centre
455-6 Street SW, Calgary

Time: Third Thursday of the month
Meeting: 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.
Program: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Registration for the program begins at 6:30 p.m.

Registration: Registration is required to attend the program. Required. Register by the Monday prior to the program.

Fee:

Members	\$5.00
Student Members	Free
Non-members	10.00

The fee is for the program portion only.

Workshops

Attend workshops to gain in-depth knowledge and skill through instruction and hands-on activities.

Location: Mount Royal College (Room E141)
4825 Richard Road SW, Calgary
Please bring \$8.00 in change for the parking meters at Mount Royal College.

Time: Scheduled Saturdays, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Registration: **Required.** Register at least 10 days prior to the workshop.
Registration must be cancelled one week in advance of the workshop or the registrant will be billed for workshop fees.

Fee:

Members	\$50.00
Student Members	25.00
Non-members	110.00

Coffee Nights

Attend coffee nights to meet with your fellow technical communicators and discuss a monthly topic in a casual setting.

Location: Annie's Books (Literary Salon)
912-16 Avenue NW, Calgary
Parking is available behind Tim Hortons.

Time: Third Tuesday of the month, 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Registration: Not required.

Fee: Free for both members and non-members.

March

Wednesday, 10 Telephone Seminar: Keywords in Indexing and Search (see page 9)

Tuesday, 16 Presentation: Instructional Design (Edmonton)

Tuesday, 16 Coffee Night: Zero in on Your SIG

Thursday, 18 Administrative Meeting
Program: The Design Element & Its Impact on Documentation

Wednesday, 24 Telephone Seminar: Winning New Business: Preparing and Submitting Proposals (see page 9)

Saturday, 27 Workshop: Concepts in Web Site Design and Usability

April

Thursday, 15 Administrative Meeting
Program: Taking the Steps to Start Your Own Business

Tuesday, 20 Coffee Night: Putting on Your Own Workshop

May

Thursday, 20 Administrative Meeting

June

Wednesday, 15 Administrative Meeting

To register...

...for programs and workshops, use our online registration form at www.stc-alberta.org/Calendar/registration.php.

Note: Due to security policies at McDougall Centre, advance online registration is mandatory for Thursday programs.

SuperScript

Contact the Editors:

Jessie Channey
Andrea Hogg
Robin Bly

newsletter@stc-alberta.org

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